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HARLOTT



A Higher Thought Story

By Samuel Mansfield Wilson

CHARLOTT

A
HIGHER
THOUGHT
STORY



BY

Samuel Mansfield Wilson

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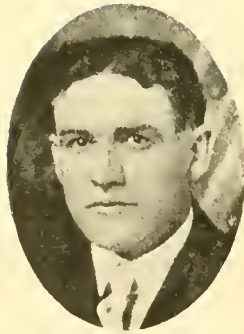
To My Sister ==
Cecella Matella

Whose sympathy and daily kindness shines
Beneath the cloud of others saddened mood;
Who saw within my weak and simple lines,
The inner feelings, clothed in language rude.

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Samuel Mansfield Wilson

CHARLOTT

A Higher Thought Story

By

Samuel Mansfield Wilson

1.

In life's great aggregate, the human atom
Is good, not bad; just spineless, weak or naughty;
By looking from the right perspective at them,
We see the victims of environment's lottery.
With many strong, like "Charlott," or "Charlotte,"
Her counterpart may not exist in life,
But strength like hers among the race is rife.

2.

The slimy details of her life, so twisted,
I leave to you, dear reader, to infer
And visualize temptations she resisted,
And many difficulties heaped upon her,
Whose youth was scarred by false pre-natal laws,
And bore another's sin for love's own cause.

3.

Charlott was an uncertain kind of girl,
Who, seeming fickle, is as true as steel.
Her high-gear'd temperament and mental whirl
Appeared to always need a balance wheel,
A safety valve, a governor or a keel,
To steer her engines and her ship of life
In safety o'er the waves of human strife.

4.

Commixed with her unstable attitude,
A kindness, closely bordering on excess;
A love for all things noble, true and good,
A ready tear for those in sore distress;
A saintly faith which few or none possess,
Which magnifies the best in every being,
And looks on others faults with eyes unseeing.

5.

Her striking beauty well may be compared
To radio-activity's unknown force,
Whose light and heat with all the world is shared
Without subtracting from the primal source.
It would have caused to take a downward course,
Unnumbered suitors, had not her pure soul
Aspired to reach a higher, nobler goal.

6.

The flawless, true contour of form and feature,
Does not describe real beauty—it defines
A marble statue's counterfeit of nature—
Although a master chisel chipped the lines.
Beauty is the snow-white soul which shines
Through every agent that we recognize—
The form, the hair, the cheeks, the lips, the eyes.

7.

Beauty fades, if the possessor loses
From evil cause, this vital, grand essential.
Envy, hate or passion's low abuses
Will leave their stain on beauty's pure credential;
Fine clothes and riches serve as incidental,
And ornament, but do not mask from sight
The lives of them who have not lived aright.

8.

These requisites were hers in over much,
With youth and health and innocence to boot.
I'll term her perfect, if there can be such
Among this old earth's human grime and soot.
Some gossip in the town was taking root
Because her antecedents were in doubt;
The truth of which she had not heard about.

9.

The wiser ones, with "Ah's," and looks expressive
Of ill foreboding for her destiny,
Pronounced her weak, impulsive and impressive,
But she had attributes they did not see
Beneath the outward seeming; the degree
Of strength of character, which sleeping lay
Would turn the flames of circumstance away.

10.

Let us digress to Charlott's infancy—
Imagine she as now a little girl,
With violet eyes and lips that seemed to be
Two cherries, half submerged in liquid coral;
With auburn hair, in thick and wavy curl,
Exemplifying true love manifest—
The beings Christ called to his side, and blest.

11.

The kindly matron of the orphanage
Informed her that her parents each had died,
When she was but a baby. Then her age
Was five, and she remembers clearly how she cried,
And we forgive the matron if she lied—
A lie should never supersede a fact,
But this one was by circumstances backed.

12.

Concerning her the woman had no knowledge,
Except that in a basket on the ground,
Nestling snugly over near the college,
This bunch of possibilities was found.
A passer was attracted by the sound,
Issuing from the helpless thing, forsaken,
Which to the foundling's home by him was taken.

13.

At six she was adopted by a pair,
And thus became their daughter, through the laws.
Her foster father said: "I do not care
Where she has come from, or whose child she was;
I do not deny the right of faults and flaws
Attaints of blood, and passions fierce and wild,
To be transferred from parent to child."

14.

"We come into the world immaculate,
We inherit neither vice, disease or sins;
'Tis after we arrive the mortal state,
The false idea's deadly work begins.
The ignorant, to find excuses, pins
Their faith to this old boggy, in defiance
Of physies, medicine or recent science.

15.

Twelve happy years have passed, since she had come
To this good husband and unloving wife;
To her it was a loved and happy home,
Unmarred by sorrow, pain or family strife.
She filled a vacuum in the woman's life,
Who lavished on the child the love she bore
For him she must forget forever more.

16.

Her foster mother, I must speak of her;
She plays a mighty role in this small story.
I will not try to smirch her character,
Or stain her name, with my weak oratory.
I do not blame her, and I rather glory
In her for yielding at true love's assault,
Had not another suffered for the fault.

17.

I'll name her "Annie," sometimes simply "Ann"—
That does not count, the effect is just the same;
It serves the story's simple little plan,
And someone said, "There's nothing in a name."
Her love was such an all-increasing flame,
Which grew by hunger and by being denied,
And must be vented, or explode inside.

18.

His pure white light was burning still, for one
Too high above her station to attain,
Who basked in opulence since life begun,
And boasted that his great ancestral strain,
Through generations, had not borne the stain
Of honest labor on their sweating brow,
And that he would not, could not, break it now.

19.

He deemed it would be wrong to marry her,
While taking these false reasons to account;
The curse of wealth had formed a barrier
Which even the wings of love could not surmount.
His mind's pure spring was poisoned at the fount
By that insane, insensate, false tradition —
His legacy of iniquity from feudal superstition.

20.

So this considerate simpleton departed,
And gentle Annie cursed the hand of fate,
In truth, the girl was nearly broken-hearted;
She loved too deeply, and had learned too late
That tears and love cannot eradicate
The super-selish impotence of them
Who follow gold's, and sidestep nature's plan.

21.

You say there are no classes in this land;
Then place a "bunch of money" in your wallet,
Go straight into New York and play a hand—
Become acquainted with the men who "call it;"
Buy them champagne to tickle up their palate,
And try to break into the upper ten—
And your reception will convince you then.

22.

When e'er a wealthy biped choose a mate,
From out the poorer, bigger, better class,
The press doth minutely elaborate
The story of "The Prince and Country Lass,"
Though he may be an inbred and an ass;
And she as grand as rainbows in a storm;
His tinselled pals will say, "It is bad form."

23.

How will the manufacturer of prose and rhymes
Conjure themes on which to build a plot,
Or find a motive for romance or crimes,
In those devoutly hoped for, future times,
When gold and all the misery it hath brought,
Are dumped in blank oblivion to rot?

24.

A year passed slowly by, and had not brought
A word or line from him to tearful Ann.
Accepting hers as just the common lot
Of all who do run counter to love's plan,
She soon was married to another man;
He said, "for better," but she knew, for "worse,"
His name is "Will," his pedigree starts next verse.

25.

I will not laud his name or throw bouquets,
But say that he was good in each respect—
It sounds more sensible than hollow praise.
While he embraced no "ism," "cult" or "sect,"
He was a Christian, firm, sincere, erect,
Though he may be, from others point of view,
A "demagogue," "agnostic," "heretic" or "Jew."

26.

He came into their midst two years before,
From whence, except "down East," he did not state,
And purchased, shortly afterward, a store.
Was tall and handsome and just twenty-eight,
And angled for with matrimonial bait.
His past to all was clothed in mystery,
So I will give you his life's history.

27.

His father was a "mollusk," who deserted
His wife and baby at a tender age.
Of all the weaklings, thus so far reported,
This kind of "jelly fish," receives the badge—
They love the sweets of life, and shirk the wage.
The law should force deserters of their wives
To care for howling children all their lives.

28.

His mother's heart was broken and she chose
To sink, in order that her child might rise;
Her unsophistication did disclose,
No other path to her despairing eyes.
Unschool'd and helpless, simple and unwise,
Her Christian precepts with her sins collide,
And Will was five years old the day she died.

29.

A country merchant down in old Vermont,
Had just one only daughter to his credit.
He always had desired and felt the want
Of sons to help and cheer him, and he said it
Was not his blame, because the sons were "debit,"
And so to piece out his desire's lack,
He seized on Will, in town, and brought him back.

30.

He proved a father and a friend to Will,
By clean example's true philosophies—
Endeavoring, always kindly, to instill
Into the boy the nobler qualities.
A man of force and poise, of sense and ease,
The teachings which seem light in youthful ears,
Return redoubled at maturer years.

31.

The merchant died when Will was twenty-one,
And made a wisely-foolish last request,
"That he would wed his daughter, and become
Joint-heir, receiving his entire bequest."
The daughter loved him two times more than best,
And he loved less the more she worshipped him;
Consenting, just to please the old man's whim.

32.

He strove his best to love his sister-wife,
But civil war was raging in his breast;
Emotional insurrection's deadly strife
Was shaking his small kingdom with unrest.
The consummation of that dear request,
Amalgamated duty with deception—
He could not mix them and escape combustion.

33.

"I married you to please my dying father,
But this false tie must not perpetuate;
To cut my right hand off I would much rather,
Than that the bonds be indeterminate,"
"I cannot love you, and I do not hate,"
The wife replied with feeling; "Yes, I know
If you feel that way, you are free to go."

34.

A lady demonstrator came one day,
To boost a new food-fad, and aid extortion.
She stirred in beauty with the food, some way,
And served alluring smiles with every portion.
Made "goo goo" eyes at Will, for mere diversion—
Her champagne glances warmed him up inside—
He did not know those bubbling dimples lied.

35.

Perceiving how the "rural lobster" fell
A prey to her trained eyes' mesmeric lash,
She seized the opportunity to sell
Flirtation as a "side line" to the "hash"—
It did not pay to simply make a "mash."
She was a working girl and needed cash,
So he fell in her fish-seine with a splash.

36.

He told the charmer of the dying wish
That he should wed the unloved-loving spouse.
The sorcerer then replied unto the "fish,"
"Not time, nor your unkindliness, can douse,
My love fire's quenchless flame, nor limits house
My measureless and all-extending love—
What shall we do? Oh, help us, heaven above!"

37.

He answered her: "Our love is so intense,
To save a scandal you must go from hence,
Resigned by plausible and false pretense,
And live in town, in style, at my expense.
Your beauty should be matched with opulence,
And it will be the safer, saner course,
For each of us, awaiting the divorce."

38.

She lived in town and "Willie" paid the bills;
Meanwhile, his drooping spirits did reconp—
He walked on water and he ran up hills,
And lived on love and dreams and hope and soap.
No man is happier than the easy dupe;
He soars in realms so near to heaven's border,
That when he falls the crash is so much harder.

39.

Casually he learned, his lady friend
Was entertaining men at her apartment.
The news brought fears and worries without end,
And jealousy, in one complete assortment.
He said unto himself, "If her deportment
Proves the story not to be a lie,
I'll murder her, though I myself shall die."

40.

To free his mind of venomous suspicion,
He hired two slippery sleuths to shadow her.
Among the salaried canines, their position
Was slightly lower than the common cur—
Below the lowest in the calendar.
They bought the evidence with Will's own coin
By photographing crimes the laws enjoin.

41.

She lost the graft and Willie lost his money,
And still the lesson he received was cheap.
He learned from that experience—sad and funny—
That "As we sow, we always have to reap."
And "will be judged, by company we keep."
The savage bumping turned him face to face
With his own self, to settle his own case.

42.

Their dissolution suit was soon decided,
On grounds of "incompatability."
The business was sold, and was divided
Between the separators, equally.
And he arranged to leave immediately,
Arriving in the far off middle west—
So we'll proceed, with Annie and the rest.

43.

She said to him, before their wedding day,
In earnest, forceful terms: "Will, I do not,
And never can, love you in just the way
The woman should with whom you share your lot;
Because, I love—she should have said, "A sot"—
She did not, though; she simply said, "Another;"
"I only love you as I love a brother."

44.

"I tell you now, and please do not mistake me,
Our marriage will be only partnership;
If, in some future time, you do forsake me,
Or wish the lawful bonds that bind, would slip,
I will not hinder, and will help the grip
Of galling ties to loosen; and my friend
You will remain forever, to the end."

45.

The man replied: "Give me your sacred vow,
That you will wed me, and you will be true.
I love you dearly, and I feel, somehow,
That you will learn to love as I love you.
I will do more than mortal man can do
To make you happy in so high degree,
That you will love me dearer far than he."

46.

Will was foolish; he had better far
Obeyed the strong impulse, and said "good-bye,"
Ridiculous as blending snow with tar,
To even presume that love like hers would die.
We learn to love? No, pardon me; that's a lie;
Love is the attuned vibrations of the soul,
And when the chord is struck, there is the goal.

47.

Do you love your husband? Many wives
Would answer most sincerely: "Heavens, no;"
We loathe them, and the sunshine of our lives
Is turned to utter darkness here below."
The feeling by propinquity doth grow;
Constant contact leads to earthly bliss,
Or tinctures living with the serpent's hiss.

48.

Women who endure a life like this
Abhor the glorious thought of motherhood,
And pray from out their hearts that they may miss,
Being parent to a most unwelcome brood.
By being badly-good, and legally-lewd;
They counter and oppose great nature's law,
And suffer inward fangs to gnaw and gnaw.

49.

Those who learn too late, they are mismated,
Should break the tie before their lives are wrecked;
More honor lies in being separated,
Than live together out of self-respect.
"Twere better that the race would be unsexed,
And from unwished posterity exempt,
Than indissoluble bonds of cold contempt.

50.

The ancient precepts of society
Afford to marriage but a false protection.
The law, the custom, and propriety
Expend their forces in the wrong direction;
Love should be the law of the election
Of heart for heart, when soul to soul responds;
And if it wavers, then dissolve the bonds.

51.

Man is the only animal extant,
Whose love-force is not baser instinct's presence.
Love's highest office is a sacrament—
The blending of the soul with mortal essence.
Applied intelligently, its iridescence
Would shed a clearer ray on social life,
And to lax moral's throat, apply the knife.

52.

Charlotte came into their household only
Ten months after their mock wedding-day.
Annie had begun to feel more lonely
With Will at home than when he was away,
And seemed more pleased the longer he would stay.
She visited the orphan's home meanwhile,
And chose Charlotte for her dimpled smile.

53.

On hearing Annie had procured a waif,
The neighbor ladies all evinced dismay,
And told each other, gravely, how unsafe
It was for decent people, such as they,
To rear a child whose very parents may
Have been a leper, or a prostitute;
And that the child would surely follow suit.

54.

Mankind is good—or good degrees of bad—
Being much of many things, and some of both;
The trials and temptations we have had,
Prove our resistance to the things we loath.
I tell you this, and would say under oath,
That when experience broadens out your view,
You then will censure none for acts they do.

55.

Annie, through the years, grew thin and frail;
A malady egregiously complex,
A painless agony, a flushing pale.
The wise old doctor, hid behind his specs,
Knew it was the physical reflex
Of inward battles, which were being fought
Between despair and hope, to govern thought.

56.

Charlotte loved her more than any other,
And told the Lord in prayer how she had been
"So loving and so kind," and called her, "Mother,"
With all sincerity the term can mean.
The grown up child was now almost eighteen,
And several years had gladly borne the care
And nursing of this patient of despair.

57.

The Doctor said, "Dope will not cure your ills."
He wished to get the sufferer off his hands;
Was tired prescribing poison headache pills,
And nerve destroyers, known by many brands,
So he advised a trip to other lands,
In hopes she soon would find a peaceful grave,
Or else procure the thing her heart did crave.

58.

Will was not a rich man of repute;
He owned the little business down the street.
Competition had grown so acute,
He had all he could do to make ends meet.
The news knocked him completely off his feet;
But summoning his courage, he was brave;
And said, "She must go. Anything to save."

59.

He was a noble soul, who would have given
His life, for this most loveless, love-sick woman;
His hearts blood freely, and his hope of heaven,
Or used all means, occult or superhuman.
He deemed the Doctor's words an evil omen;
It is one way the M. D.'s gently tender
Excuse for failure, and avoid surrender.

60.

Will handed down a priceless legacy—
The ripened fruit of lessons learned in youth;
By teaching Charlotte life's philosophy,
From every angle of the naked truth;
And kept her mind's machinery running smooth,
By divers aggregates of positive thoughts,
Avoiding deep worn ruts and grooves and slots.

61.

Their destination chosen, in advance,
The details of the route, they did rehearse;
Deciding, it was best to go to France,
Where sunshine either cures or makes one worse—
Charlotte was to accompany her as nurse.
The luggage packed, the tickets bought already;
He kissed them each good-bye, with voice unsteady.

62.

Love was never made to be one-sided,
Their parting kiss would make an image weep.
The emotions of the husband were divided
Between despair and hope, and anguish deep;
She, like caged wildness waking from a sleep,
And breathing after years true freedom's air,
Was eager to escape the barred despair.

63.

Scarcely had they stepped aboard the ship,
Then who appeared but Annie's old time lover.
He knew not they were going on this trip,
And said, "The reason I am going over,
Is just for recreation and recover;
I have been ill of late." We may surmise
The gormand only needed exercise.

64.

He thus went on, "How grand it is to see you;
How strange it seems;" And speculated whether
"Luck" or "chance," or "happen-so," in lieu
Of information, had brought them together;
Discussed the wind, the sea, the sky, the weather,
Reiterating still the sentence sweet,
"It seems a miracle that we should meet."

65.

Few understand the phenomenon of attraction,
Or fathom those occult and psychic laws;
Desire through will impels the force to action—
Feeling is the primary, basic, cause.
This force will ever be and always was
The essence of the Universe, and we know not
If it be God or spirit, soul or thought.

66.

Since this unnecessary evil has come back
into our narrative to take a part,
Let him be known henceforth as merely "Jack,"
Or "Jackass," but the name is not so short.
I beg his pardon for this ill report,
For being rich, I pity him no less—
The inheritor of a blight, "unearned excess."

67.

Their voyage o'er the calm and glassy sea
Was like all other voyages may be, in this:
Behind some place, where no one else could see,
He and Ammie met to love and kiss,
And spend small whiles in most colossal bliss.
He had friends aboard the bounding bark,
So their proceedings must be kept "in dark."

68.

Do you blame gentle Ammie, dear, for falling
A victim to the snake's hypnotic art?
He was the "nonentity" she had been calling—
The "nothing" which had swollen within her heart.
One stolen tryst with him, so sweet and short,
Outweighed decades of living, heretofore—
Oh! Could it only last forevermore!

69.

Alas! Her body was the thing he wanted—
He held as naught her love's celestial flame;
His brutalized mentality was haunted
With lustful ghosts, which ever went and came.
He cared not to encompass her deep shame,
And only strove to keep himself from blame,
And share with none his money or his name.

70.

He told the friends aboard; "She used to wait
On table for my mother, years ago;
She was such a well girl, but of late
Her former superb health is failing slow.
The doctor sent her hitherward, and so
I wish to lend her friendship and protection,
And steer the "hoobs" away from her direction."

71.

The party disembarked in war-torn France.
Annie leased a cool, sequestered nook,
Where foliage, trees and flowers did enhance
The view which either way you wished to look—
A little cottage by a babbling brook,
From "snooping guys," and prying eyes forsook,
And Jack wrote the address down in a book.

72.

As Charlott viewed the hawk and sparrow flirt.
Her heart seemed shrinking smaller in her breast;
Their actions caused a deep and painless hurt,
And filled her with forebodings and unrest.
She longed for home, out in the middle west,
And wrote to Will: "My Mother dear, is well."
But Annie burned the letter; fire don't tell.

73.

The guilt which put her conscience on the rack,
Dear Annie made a failure of concealing.
She said to Charlott, "Isn't it dear of Jack,
To show so much solicitude and feeling?"
To substitute friendship for crooked dealing
Requires an adept in the art of fraud—
Beginners lose by being too slick-shod.

74.

Conscience is a touchstone from beyond—
The great defender of the soul from sin;
No being will go wrong who does respond
To that small voice which speaks to them within.
Its audible-silent promptings drown the din
Of earthly things and disobeyers each
Must suffer in proportion to the breach.

75.

Will at home was struggling with his "biz"—
He canceled credit and promiscuous charging,
Endeavoring through that "new-old" ruse of his,
To increase his profit's microscopic margin.
The business was small, but was enlarging,
And Annie's keep was less than he had thought;
Jack paid in part, at least, for mischief wrought.
(Will did not know it, and it helped a lot.)

76.

For Jack and Annie life was here complete—
With Charlott sent away, on some pretext,
His visits had become more long and sweet.
The months had flown so fast, they each were vexed;
False pleasures fade, like flowers, in dimpled necks.
Wrong-doers know not what is coming next—
The shadow fell, the bitter consequence
Of too much love and not enough sex-sense.

77.

Love's medicine, through all the blissful weeks,
Had brought her form and figure to perfection—
The vital glow burned bright in Annie's cheeks.
The aloes of this truth now brought reaction—
A happy-misery, sourly-sweet distraction.
She grieved not for her sin; her soul was wrung
By fear of thrusts from every venomed tongue.

78.

"Dear God," she prayed, "If in me you implanted
Confinless love, which kept my life inthrall
And led by judgment, it must then be granted
I need not ask forgiveness for my fall.
I did not wish to shun the thing I wanted;
I beg no mercy and I drink no gall;
I only know my soul is clean, withal."

79.

Shudderingly she sighed: "What will Will say?
He has a claim on my good character."
It was not in her heart or mind to slay
The confidence he had reposed in her:
His trust and kindness and his faith did stir

A hatred for her own ingratitude.

"Oh, Heaven," she cried: "Cannot some power intrude
To hide the blame of wedlock's forfeiture?"

It will do him no harm, and me much good."

80.

One eve, with tear stained eyes and vision double,
She came to Charlott's bed-room door, undressed,
And sobbed: "Dear heart, I am in grievous trouble—"
She felt that Charlott had already guessed.
Against the girl's warm heart she then was pressed,
And Charlott was beholding manifest,
The fear thought, tangible and unexpressed.

81.

The daughter shared her mother's every grief,
Humoring her each fad and childish whim—
Did all within her power to lend relief,
Assuming borrowed sorrow, black and grim;
And loved her more, the more she hated him
Whose money would have bought elsewhere; but he
Had killed their sunshine with their obloquy.

82.

When told, Jack's face with mirth grew scarlet;
Becoming serious, said: "I have a plan—
Saddle this whole business on to Charlott,
And both of you go back to your 'old man.'
It matters not to make of her a harlot;
She isn't anybody, anyhow—
Let's settle on the idea, here and now."

83.

It seems to me, whenever plotters plot,
They leave their better natures on the shelves,
And care not who is poisoned, stabbed or shot,
So long as they can save their own sweet selves.
The fiends of Hades and all the wicked elves
Would nauseate and sicken at the thought,
Of branding innocence with a borrowed blot.

84.

At his suggestion, Ann was sorely grieved;
Yet ideas grow by use or by contagion
And this one when it once had been conceived,

Jack's strong induction caused its propogation.
His dynamo's positive pole was degradation,
So her resistance soon was neutralized;
Oh, could she only do as she advised.

85.

He said one evening, cold, impertinent;
"I'll buy your silence, only name the price."
It was the keenest shaft he could have sent.
She froze his tainted tender, in words of ice:
"You beast," she cried; "It is the greater vice—
To ask for pay for love so freely given
Is insult, blacker than the scowl of heaven."

86.

Meanwhile, she wrote to Will a friendly letter,
As self-accusing tears were gently raining.
The letter ran: "I think I am some better,
My strength seems steadily and slowly gaining,
I fear you will grow tired of my complaining.
The Doctor tells me I am growing strong,
And may return home well, e'er very long."

87.

"The wasting malady we so much feared
Would be the sunshine of my life's eclipse
Has lessened much, and shall have disappeared
Within another several month's elapse.
I do not know—the hand of fate, perhaps,
That led me here to find a cure, by chance,
Hath done us wrong, in bringing me to France."

88.

As well for him, good man; he little knew
The burden which she bore beneath her heart.
And he replied: "You are so brave and true;
Stay and grow strong, and I will do my part."
His letter lashed her like a rider's quirt.
The sting of guilt augments by tendered aid,
When neither man can rightly be repaid.

89.

At home the girl had many childish beaux,
And here the city dudes came in a car.
Her beauty's scent had reached their sniffing nose,

And they had heard her stock was more than par.
Returning minus what they had come for,
Charlott was not boy-struck, so they found,
And Annie did not wish them sticking round.

90.

As the gloaming blended into night the women sat together,
A long, long time in silence—neither spoke.
Annie's thoughts were raging like foul and gusty weather;
At length the thunder of her brainstorm broke:
"Say Charlott, dearie, wouldn't it be a joke,
If you assume the role of motherhood,
So Will shall not know I have not been good?"

91.

She clothed the question in a jocular guise
To mask the magnitude of such deceit;
She knew by their deep look, those azure eyes
Would never countenance the devilish feat—
They hated all things foul, unclean, unsweet.
Congealed with ghastliness, at length she said;
"My Mother, dear, we each were better dead."

92.

The girl was shocked beyond her power to think,
While Annie thus continued: "I will be
An outcast from the world; this shame will sink
Me in the putrid mire of infamy,
And Will shall curse my name and memory.
I do not ask you, darling dear," she lied—
But Charlott had decided, calm, dry-eyed.

93.

"My angel Mother, dear, I love you so,
There's nothing I would not attempt for you.
I'll gladly shoulder all your grief and woe—
You are my all—the little I can do
Will not repay your love. What may ensue
Can never harm me, and 'twill not be long;
I am invulnerable and I am strong."

94.

"You cannot do it; no, my dearest heart;
It is beyond the scope of woman's power;

One word or intimation on your part,
Would sink me to the depths in one short hour.
I'd rather meet it now, and see Heaven lour
Than raise my child 'til he would understand,
And have you fail, and blast me with this brand."

95.

"I may do anything I wish to do,
By concentrating on the end in view.
To save you and the child, I vow to you,
Before High Heaven, I will be firm and true.
My love will be the power to see me through.
The darker side I will deny, discard—
To do acts that way, Mother, is not hard."

96.

"Before your valor, dear, my weakness dies;
My impotence succumbs at love's assault.
Your inspiration and your sacrifice
Will change my nature, while it hides my fault,
And if your courage or your love should halt,
Come and tell me plainly your desire,
And I'll release you and will face the fire."

97.

"Remember, Mother, in another year,
When I am daubed with slander's blackest paint,
I shall not need your pity or a tear,
Because my soul and conscience bears no taint.
I claim to be just human—not a saint;
But humans may attain the mightiest might
By living, doing and thinking right."

98.

No power on earth can down a will like hers;
It even could scale the slime on Hell's abyss.
The blinding clouds of circumstance disperse
Before the rays of mental strength like this.
The shafts of fortune break or bend or miss
Her pierceless citadel of dynamic power,
Which grows more strong, through sacrifice, each hour.

99.

"You know," replied her Mother; "certain men
Consider young girls who have gone astray

And striving to upbuild their names again,
As more approachable, and easier prey;
Young widows, too, are treated in this way."
The daughter interposed: I long to scorch
Their brute propensities with my tongue's torch."

100.

"Besides," continued Annie; "Every town
Has many women only partly decent;
Wavering 'twixt extreme of up and down
Of all conditions; it's the most unpleasant,
When moral moons are shrinking to the crescent.
Strong hearts alone can rise from moral breach;
The saddest thing on earth is woman sinking.
The heart-aches and the true-self's dying screech,
They drown in nightly brawl and beastly drinking—
A temporary drugged reprieve from painful, tortured thinking.

101.

"I've been told of special places where these tainted people
meet—
A basement beer-joint, restaurant, licensed clean and neat,
To serve drinks openly to those who feign they wish to eat.
The lunch is technical pretense to keep the law by false deceit—
A mock-cafe, vice clearing house, a mart, a sample-room retreat,
Where dates are made and prices set in smothered accent cold
and sweet.
Competition is most keen between the female indiscreet.
Formality is cast aside, the glance inviteth to a seat,
Where terms are stated as complete as any legal business feat.
Perhaps she needs the coin to pay rent, apparel, bread and meat,
Or clothe a child, whose sire denied, the questioned fruit of
passion's heat.
She may have wed and found instead of truth and love, a low
conceit,
And thereby lost her faith in man, her own life's purpose to
defeat.
She may be one whom some unkindness made with rage and
scorn replete,
Who, at the crucial hour in life, knew not the snares beneath
her feet,
Or she may be a passion-freak, a moral-imbecile, a cheat.
This motley throng, for-gathers there, where none are friends,
and strangers greet,

And no one sees or seems to care, not even the "Cop" upon his beat.

Their presence there proclaims their ware, and keeps them off the chilly street.

102.

"Many times since Will and I were wed,
We have discussed life's dark, unsavory side.
I will repeat to you the things he said
About the mighty gulf which doth divide
Society's two factions. It may guide
And arm you 'gainst the ruthless human tide,
Which strives to sink, whoever starts to slide.

103.

He said: "I've gone the route; I know the city well.
Its good and bad; its medium, slow and fast;
And many of the tales which I could tell
Would nauseate, and make you stand aghast;
'Twere better not to know, and to have past
Your life in some sequestered, quiet place,
Far from the helpless victims of the race."

104.

"No doubt you would be shocked if you but knew
The secrets of the moral shams and sewers;
The human froth and slime, and residue,
Sweltering in the city's dark immures,
A festering sore, which nothing ever cures—
Advancement's handmaid, civilization's curse
Commercialized, and growing worse and worse.

105.

A stranger asked me one time, "Who are those,
With painted lips and hair all bleached and curled?"
I answered him, while looking at his clothes;
"Why, those are ladies of the underworld;
Two soiled ones whom society has hurled
Into the seething, human garbage heap,
Where all may sow who do not wish to reap."

106.

"Why do you ask me? You must be unschooled
In what the world does not consider nice;
Else, I am sure, you would not have been fooled

On meeting they who merchandise in vice.
Their faces tell you they have paid the price
Of someone else's fault beside their own,
While they are serving sentence, all alone."

107.

"Their eyes bespeak the settled scorn they feel
For moral laws, whose verdict says they must
For one misstep, or many, bare the seal
Of shame and ostracism most unjust.
They seek revenge by burning up in lust
Other beings, whom I have no doubt,
Are worse than they, but have not been found out."

108.

"They are about the only ones, I find,
Who are not hypocrites and false pretenders;
They suffer, through the weakness of mankind,
And ask no sympathy, or no defenders;
Their low exploiters are the worse offenders—
Beyond redemption sunk, and still that power
Tends to hold them down, and sink them lower."

109.

"Is it the hand of fate? No; circumstance
Hath placed them where they can't do otherwise;
Poverty, ignorance, beauty, or love's trance,
Hath launched them in this shameful enterprise,
Where all may sink and none may hope to rise.
Not years of true repentance make excuse;
Only death obliterates the abuse."

110.

"Every man who feels the human pulse,
Must know what forces prey upon the weak;
And still reforms and laws bring no results
Worth while, and do not gain the ends they seek.
The higher-up's might suffer—so to speak,
If not effect—now, listen—but the cause
Were brought within the scope of drastic laws."

111.

His sermon quoted, Annie wrote: "Dear Will,
Charlott, is just what—I need not name;
It is a heavy blow to me, but still

I feel the child is really not to blame.
She is so young, it seems an awful shame;
But here in France the people are so lax."
The facts, as sharp as tacks, she smoothed with rhetoric wax.

112.

He wrote, replying to her note: "Dear wife,
Just try and do the very best you can;
It can't be remedied now, and such is life.
When are you coming home? Who is the man?
Business is improving," thus it ran.
He told a married man that very night;
The rumor traveled like a streak of light.

113.

In sentences like this, "I told you so—
"That's what they get for raising someone's kid;
They had been warned, but it took time to show
That she would do as other orphans did."
The gossip slid like lightning down a skid;
They lashed poor Charlott, till their tongues were aching—
'Tis sad they did not know they were mistaken.

114.

About this time, an unacquaintance came;
A package of sweet innocence arrives;
Resembling less the sire than the dame;
And merey! How the little fellow thrives!
And if the colic or the croup or hives
Should make him howl, or cause him to be sick,
To cure them I will have him grow old quick.

115.

They fed the extra boarder from a bottle;
She did not dare, (I hope you understand.)
If they put the nipple too far down his throttle,
He choked and coughed and cried to beat the band.
They loved to hold the bottle in their hand.
Like women folk, they said, "He is so nice;
We would not lose him, to avoid the price."

116.

Charlott practised acting out the part,
In order that the lie at home, seem true;
She loved the little angel from the start,

And found it was not very hard to do.
At times the mother would be jealous, too;
Denying thus her child to hide her sins
The Mother often wished that he were twins.

117.

Jack met a woman there in sunny France,
Who pierced his higher manhood to the core.
The resurrection from his selfish trance
Brought an exuberance of love's own store.
His spirit and his being's matrix bore
No likelihood to what it was, erstwhile;
But new embodied, by her saintly smile.

118.

The girl was cultured, wealthy, pure and sweet,
With beauty, sense, and spirit bold and chaste;
Their honeyed heaven of courtship was complete;
The new-made man real joy began to taste,
Through love's grand incognito, he embraced
A higher code of living and of thought—
Love even will save the sinner or the sot.

119.

A few short weeks before their wedding day,
He sat in silent, deep and serious thought;
A vague unrest had filled him with dismay;
An inward voice or struggle which could not
Be hushed or silenced now, no matter what
The consequences were—it must be faced,
And either abided by, or be erased.

120.

The picture of his past in bold relief
Was painted so his mind's keen eye could see,
Resembling somewhat minutely, a leaf
Torn from the ledger of iniquity;
Sins and moral lapses seemed to be
The background of a life, which on the whole,
Showed passion's mastery, without self-control.

121.

Before this vivid air-drawn interdiction,
His new acquired manhood shrank abashed;
No sentence is so hard as self conviction;

None suffer more than they by conscience lashed.
Were all the universe in chaos dashed,
The effect might be compared to the assault
We suffer when the soul is in revolt.

122.

Scarcely audible, he breathed in stifled groan,
"Thank God, she knows not of the path I followed;
May years of true uprightness not atone
For actions dissolute and most unhallowed?
The outcasts, who in sin have deeply wallowed,
Must kneel and kiss the garment of a saint;
Lest all who come in contact bear the taint."

123.

"Her innocence and virtue by contrast,
Enlarge and magnify the faults in me;
My life with her would always be o'er cast,
For fear she suffer from my obloquy.
'Twere better to be dead, than know that she
Must share my body and my soul's pollution,
When I alone should make the retribution."

124.

"I hate myself—my effluence is obscene;
My cursed progenitors were human lies;
I wish my blood were turned to gasoline,
Which my infectious breath would vaporize,
Its pent explosive's might to emphasize—
There with my spark of life, ignite combustion,
And blow my soul to cinders with concussion."

125.

The great decision here was made. Next day
He told her, as the words did sear his heart;
Affairs at home were calling him away,
Not later than tomorrow he must start.
Thus ended their acquaintance—sweet, but short —
Her love with absence ever did increase,
And grew more potent after his decease,

126.

She was a writer of no mean degree,
Who could draw tears with keen and graphic pen;
She wrote a poem to his dear memory,

And would re-read it, o'er and o'er again,
In lonely hours, as sorrow's benison.
My puny lines cannot interpret French,
But tells the import of her heart's deep wench.

THE POEM.

127.

"My loved and lost! Each hour has been a year,
Since you have passed the vale of human ken.
I miss you more and love you far more dear
Than I were ever capable of, when
We were together, in this earthly sphere.
Time but augments the void I suffer here—
An emptiness of life, forever growing,
Which you, dear heart, once filled to over-flowing."

128.

"I always feel your presence is so near
That I can almost touch you; oft in dreams
We live and love again, and I can hear
Your dear voice calling to me, and it seems
That you have only been away somewhere
And have returned. Then waking, blank despair
Engulfs me with a loneliness so dense,
It smothers all my life and soul and sense."

129.

"Did you, my lover, leave me for some breach
Of kindness, which you suffered at my hands?
Was it for that you went beyond my reach,
And left me darkly groping, midst the sands
Of this world's barren waste of desert lands?
Did I unknowingly, by act or speech,
Offend, or wound you? Tell me, I beseech.
I pray you through the cosmic cipher-code,
To answer me, from your unknown abode."

130.

"This self incrimination doth o'erwhelm
More than the smite of them whose hearts are breaking;
I suffer in the super-conscious realm
More than in dreams, or in the hours of waking.
False sense and unreality mistaking

For very truth, or is it nature's way
Of telling what I fear, and dare not say?"

131,

"Oh, make my fears' denial manifest,
For I must meet the world, with laugh and song:
That fear transcends my valors' supreme test,
Else I would suffer and grow poised and strong.
Though interest wane, and living lost its zest,
The journey to the end will not be long,
I cannot share my sorrow with the throng;
Its sweetly sacred pangs are mine alone,
God grant they have no sorrows of their own."

132.

Her love and sorrow cleared her soul of dross,
And recoined her sympathies with brighter gloss;
She passed Gethsemane with the red cross,
Exchanging saintly service for her loss.

133.

Their journey home holds nothing of import,
Except one thing I wish to mention here;
Conjecturing the commotion the report
Was causing in the native atmosphere;
And how their friends would act toward Charlott, dear.
They knew before hand—why of course, they knew—
Women always know how women do.

134.

"The cruelly painful, deepest heart incision
Connected with my acting of the part,
Will come if Will shall say with cold derision,
"I thought you were a weakling, from the start."
I fear his wounded pride will break my heart—
I know his mighty faith and trust in me—
I will collapse at his contumely."

135.

"He gloried, proving calumnious gossip wrong,
Which did prenominate my destined fall;
And taught me always to "Be strong," "Be strong;"
Be brave and kind and virtuous, withal;
And do not stoop to actions low and small.

Life holds a higher mission here for you,
And you will lose it, if you are not true."

136.

"Insure your being's upward trend, in nature's evolution,
By murdering anger, fear and hate, and envious, selfish dream-
ing;
Dispose of others faults and flaws, by love's true absolution,
Which sees alone the real self, behind the outward seeming.
Apply it, daughter, dear, and know life's truest, deepest mean-
ing.
I wish to prove through you that all is culture of the mind—
That as the mortal twig is bent, the tree of life's inclined."

137.

"Free your spirit's idea-mint of carnal, lewd alloys,
And shun the bestial as you would the adder;
The body is the soul's reflex, the mind's true counter-poise,
The aggregate of thoughts in concrete matter.
Use your difficulties' bars with which to build a ladder,
To scale in safety over obstacles' o'er hanging cliff;
And shout, "I am! I can! I will!" And scorn that weak word
"If."

138.

"Form no habits, either good or ill;
Use repetition only for uplift;
Perform unpleasant tasks to train the will,
To stem the current's force, and not to drift.
Allow no fissure, crevice, seam or rift
To change the focus of the mind's true lens,
Which sorts the truth from falsehood's many binges "

139.

"Can I return and meet him? Wait! The idea just—
Ah, ha! A new incentive arms my trust.
It is, that while he deems me child of lust,
I'm saving him a deep and savage thrust.
The idea brings me boldness, strength and gust,
To dare the waves of slander's highest flood,
And some day he will know all I've withstood."

140.

"He loves my mother dearly; that alone
Impels me to the task in his behoof;

The child and mother saved, while I atone
 For sins, against which my spirit's armor's proof.
 Do I procrastinate or stand aloof?
 I welcome and invite the sacred load,
 Of saving others and I need no goad."

141.

Will scanned the track a tedious hour, looking for the train,
 With brand new "togs," a broad and pleasant smile.
 To see that he was happy was a little more than plain
 For he had lived alone a long, long while.
 He kissed his wife, then Charlott, in just the selfsame style
 He would have done if nothing had been wrong,
 While Charlott's heart was beating like the hammer of a gong

142.

'Then he took the baby. He was thinking of a manger,
 Or something else, and said quite fatherly:
 "Isn't he an athlete? Hello, you little stranger;
 I will never let you go away from me—
 Annie he is laughing: Lookee, See!"
 The effervescent youngster cooed like carbonated fizz.
 Charlott sighed away down deep: "I wish that he were his."

143.

Society ladies of the town showed without compunction,
 By cold demeanor that in their regard,
 Charlott, dear, had dwindled away beyond extinction.
 A number of the others tried so hard
 By sweet hypocrisy, to hide the unction,
 With which her shining, shielded life was scarred.
 They glazed with alabaster feelings tarred,
 For all had pre-ordained her with their tongue
 Long years ago, when she was very young.

144.

It irked them that the girl appeared so happy and serene,
 Impregnable to slights and unperturbed by ostracism;
 She felt they were excusable for treating her so mean,
 By being taught in early life, by Church and catechism,
 Or fossilized and ossified and antiquated ism.
 They did believe that the noblest by farcical baptism,
 And unoffending innocents called "Bastards" of the law,
 And they who bear them to the world are sunk in Hell's black
 maw.

145.

"How long, O Lord! How long, O Lord." As colored preachers
say,
"Till sense and knowledge disannuls the past.
Many threadbare ideas would fall into decay,
If it were not near so profitable to make the old things last.
We pay in wars and blood and tears for holding on so fast.
God speed the day when bad will pay less profit than the good;
The earth will then be used by men for one grand brotherhood.

146.

An older couple who were past the limit
Of contact with the bad to stultify,
Took Charlott with them to the Rockies summit,
On their vacation, some time in July.
The man had been a sportsman and a nimrod from a boy.
Charlott loved the mountains, so grand and free and high,
And wrote down to her Mother from somewhere near the sky.

147.

"I love these mountains for their very roughness,
These regal peaks, bewreathed in silken mist,
That stand austere in silent poised aloofness,
As if created solely to resist.
They seem to say, "We always did exist,
And stand immune from time and chance and change;
Above the clouds' out shining crests, sun kissed,
Proclaims us Monarchs of this mountain range."

148.

"Aspiring, fanglike, in the azure ocean,
Fixed as polaris is, and cold as fate,
The elemental forces of erosion,
Through endless time cannot disintegrate,
Dissolve, disfigure or amalgamate,
Their glassy texture. While in the ascent,
The gnarled gorges writhe precipitate,
As if by Titan hands disrupt and rent."

149.

"Among these crags, at any time of year,
The winds blow harsh; perpetual snows lie deep,
No creatures of the wild inhabit here,
Except the ibex and the mountain sheep.

These aerial grazers will securely sleep
On precipices sheer, abrupt and rude;
Defensive instinct urges them to keep
From foes who fear this shelving altitude."

150.

"Afar beneath, in endless vast expanse,
Beyond the limit of the eye to see,
The lesser mountains sleep in nature's trance,
And breathe the calm of all eternity.
In whose confines for brute supremacy,
The forest males engage in bitter wars;
The pine and spruce in solemn majesty,
Sigh out their sorrows to the listening stars."

151.

"The crystal springs, like molten pearls released,
Sing in the pebbly shadows' mottled blends;
The wild things of the wood enjoy the feast
Of nature's bounty spread in vales and glens.
I count these creatures as my very friends,
And feel the deer much lesser is a brute
Than other species, and there's something sends
A pang clear through me as I go to shoot."

152.

Upon the grandeur of this seeming allness,
I look with awe-inspired, new-opened eyes;
My puny bigness and colossal smallness,
This greatness by contrast doth emphasize.
Description faints, imagination flies
Back to creation, or the start of time.
The sacred feelings which within arise,
Are voiced in this one syllable, "Sublime."

153.

"Removed from towns, from centers of congestion,
From negative and aggregated thought,
My higher nature cries for self-expression,
And petty things of life are all forgot.
My soul outreached for it knows not what,
Exploring mystic realms least understood;
Whoever feels this glorious thrill will not
Call soul-expanding silence, "Solitude."

154.

The Rocky Mountain prospectors received the queenly
stranger

With kindly welcome, as a friend to be;
Their grizzly rough exterior brought no fear of danger;
Their faces beamed clean-living's chivalry,
Herculean giants, with maiden modesty,
Would blush to touch her vestment's farthest hem,
Her beauty woke no carnal thoughts in them."

155.

These rugged men, with arms like twisted rope,
From delving deep, to find gold's hidden tomb,
Whose grandest dream and all impelling hope,
Was just to help the dear old folks at home—
To strive and wait for fortune's prize to come,
And maybe after years, return and find
The sweetheart dead, the girl they left behind.

156.

She shared their meagre banquet regularly,
And praised with truth, the venison and beans;
Their starved hearts ached for woman's company—
Not the purchased "Transitory queens,"
But for a "Home," and all that grand word means.
They held long talk-feasts in their mountain court,
And were good friends, their minds were en-rapport.

157.

Those human mountain oaks with gnarled trunk,
Brought men-friendship she had not known before,
She had been safer in their cabin's bunk,
While they slept on pine-boughs on the earth-floor,
Than in the city's law-enmeshed immure.
The "City tainted men," she knew connects
Femate friendship, always, with the sex.

158.

She said before departing, in tones of candied pity:
"I hate to leave you, you have been so kind.
If ever in the future, you should come to our city,
Before, or after you have made the find,
With which some day your pockets will be lined,
Visit us, my Father will know you,
"I'll tell him how you think, and all you do."

159.

One of them replied: "We've been much happier since you've
 come,
 And we all feel bad to see you go away;
 You've made us think about the girls we used to know at home,
 And wonder if they think of us today.
 We are only young men yet, and hope that if we stay
 Another year, we'll strike it rich and go back like a man.
 "Good-bye, good luck! Be sure and come next summer, if you
 can."

160.

Departure was delayed a day; they missed the stage by chance,
 And spent the night at village far remote.
 Charlott did attend that eve an old-time county dance,
 Where men at most wore overalls, discarding vest and coat.
 Starched and ruffled gingham girls swayed to the organ's
 chime,
 Our tourists joined the rural fun and had a glorious time.

161.

Returning home, she met the same old pangs;
 The settled insolence of the partly good,
 The crowded-loneliness, tore with fiercer fangs
 Than hungered tigers, trained to human blood.
 Even undivulged, scarred hearts and the half-lewd,
 Hyena-like, would shrink from her attaint—
 The sinners, in this instance, shunned the saint.

162.

To be ignored is worse than to be jailed—
 A blow is not so painful as a slight.
 Direct assault inviteth the assailed
 To make excuse, surrender or to fight.
 A still anathema is a withering blight,
 And all who guiltless must endure the curse
 Deserve the pity of the universe.

163.

The personality arrives before
 Anatomy or presence comes to sight;
 The delvers in the esoteric lore,
 Would sense her astral color, tinted white—
 The tincture tells the emotion always right.

To act for love's sake, scorning the reward,
The reimbursement shows to eyes unbarred.

164.

None are so sure as those who are mistaken;
The entrenched in error are most hard to rout.
False ideals, a thousand times have shaken
The peace of earth, e'er they were weeded out.
Whence springs pernicious envy, hate and doubt,
Except from moulders of the public thought?
Who glut their greed by battles being fought,
And grow in prestige, while the corpses rot.

165.

Established ignorance loves to persecute
Discoverers of a truth which doth not please,
And strives by death or torture to refute
The glorious uplift of the man who sees—
"Columbus, Christ, Galileo, Socrates,"
And all the benefactors of mankind,
Through all the ages since the world began,
Who bring the light unto the darkened mind,
Receive from those they would set free, a ban;
And still the truth lives, though they curse the man.

166.

One evening, at the close of August's heart,
On taking her accustomed evening walk,
Charlott stopped some minutes on a street
To hear a spouting agitator talk.
His words flowed like gas engines "cast-en-bloc."
Out of kind regard for those who hate him,
I quote his gentle speech below, verbatim.

SPEECH.

167.

"You fellows who have never felt
The painful pinch of penury;
Who all your useless lives have dealt
In millions, with impunity;
You men who never yet have smelt
The sweat of your industry;

With stored up fat, which you should melt
 In honest toil's capacity,
 You who are big around the belt,
 And large in self-sufficiency;
 Imagine I am "Roosevelt,"
 And listen just for once to me."

168.

"My pseudo friends, it will not take me long;
 I will not curse or swear, or criticise,
 I do not censure, if you do, do wrong,
 For you must play the game to win the prize;
 Behind a golden citadel, the throng
 Of money-grabbers never hear the cries
 Of helpless victims, or the dying song
 Of them whose only hope is in the skies;
 But when in life's great prize-ring, wisdom's gong
 Shall end the fight, you then will realize
 That you were neither great nor good nor strong,
 But that the other fellows were not wise."

169.

The speaker having thus announced his theme,
 Proceeded to materialize his dream,
 In words of pressure, like escaping steam.

170.

"If some great Prophet seer from afar
 Should come to teach us what the sad world needs,
 And tell us why, in language bald and bare,
 One nation fattens, while another bleeds;
 What heinous causes sows the devilish seeds,
 Of wars, and crimes, and opulence, and squalor,
 Would he not say, "You fools, it all proceeds
 From "Idol Worship," and the "Useless Dollar."

171.

"For these two monsters, rulers of the earth,
 Ride o'er the people's sacred rights rough-shod;
 And teach their subjects, even from their birth,
 To slave and die for their colossal fraud.
 These cursed deities must be outlawed,
 Which men have worshipped, down through all the years;
 The "Intangible," and the "Yellow Glittering God,"
 Which fills the world with horror, blood and tears."

172.

"How many thousand souls, do you suppose,
By courtesy of "U. S.," have gone beyond?
'Can tainted profits pay for all the woes
The sale of shells is causing cross the pond?
Is greed for gain, more sacred than the bond
Of human fellowship and brotherhood?
'Can civilized Christian nations, be so fond
Of filthy lucre, soaked in human blood?"

173.

"Why save the starvers in the wake of war,
And be a profit-mongering sympathizer?
A grave within a trench is better far,
Than live a pawn for "Banker," "King" or "Kaiser."
Some day mankind is going to grow wiser,
And kneel not to a heartless, inbred snob—
The toiler shall become the supervisor,
And rob the robber of his right to rob.

174.

"What mockery, then, to pray for wars to cease
While our prosperity rests on Europe's fall.
We are not followers of the "Prince of Peace,"
But human vultures and barbarians, all;
The price the world is paying is not small—
Must still the human problem go unsolved?
When will the soul's awakening break the thrall?
And then, through knowledge, justice be evolved.

175.

"Our wealthy nation, rich in over plus,
With ten times more than all can use or need,
And still the poor we have always with us,
As sacrifices to the God of greed.
Will you admit this point? Will you concede?
Do grudging alms ameliorate the result?
No! Charity is a kalsomined insult;
It feeds the mouth and kills the independence;
And salves the consciences of grafts' defendants.
Deny the idea's putrid might, mankind is in ascendance;
Give us justice, truth and right, in their supreme resplendence.

176.

"With charity for none, with malice toward all;

Concupiscible instincts, swollen and bloated;
 With egotism large and with sympathy small,
 With firmness in the wrong, securely moated;
 "Abe's" grand, immortal words must be misquoted—
 Their opposite meaning more precisely would
 Define our shameful, modern attitude.

177.

'I would not lead you in the promised land—'
 Through your own mind, you must explore the route;
 For if I did, while you don't understand,
 Some other man would surely lead you out.
 Yourselves alone can scale life's last redoubt,
 By using that gray matter in your head;
 Which now is shrinking from disuse, instead."

178.

"Clear your mind of being muddy,
 By applied reason, thought and study—
 Learning comes to him who truly strives.
 Then you need not kneel in pleading
 To the drone bees who are feeding
 On honey pilfered from the workers' hives;
 But, in thunder tones proceeding
 From your knowledge, gained by reading,
 Demand your birthright's freedom from the gyves.
 It behooves you to be heeding
 The vampires who are bleeding
 The toilers and their children and their wives.
 More intellectual breeding
 Is all the race is needing;
 Misery reigns where ignorance survives.
 Then, with bold hearts unreceding,
 And with love and knowledge leading,
 Let us solve the problem of our daily lives."

179.

"For listening to my speech so tart and drastic,
 My gentle friends, you have my gratitude;
 You all are used to lingo soft and plastic—
 Sweet ambiguities steeped in platitude—
 Such speakers give me emmi and lassitude.
 I thank you all, "Good- night, good-bye, be good."
 Then Charlott overheard, "It sounds like who?"
 'Gene Debs or Wendell Philips, Number Two."

180.

From slights of old acquaintance, far and near,
Charlott, as you know, was not exempt;
She strove to clarify the atmosphere,
Exchanging pity's coin for cold contempt.
She did not mingle, nor did she attempt.
Books and music circumscribed her earth;
And ministering to others spiritual derth.

181.

She went on regular visits to the shums—
Our larger cities' social indigestion;
“ ‘Twere better to converse with wrecks and bums
Than suffer loneliness among congestion.”
The derelicts of fortune did not question
Her moral status; and received with thanks
Whatever kindness came within their ranks.

182.

She told her Mother of the submerged tenth;
Their needless, yet their sad and losing fight;
Of how their optimism, like absinthe,
Lethargied their horror of their plight.
“I tell you Mother, dear, it is a sight;
Their children look like imps, or ghostly elves,
And I am trying to help them, help themselves.”

183.

“The one thing I would do if I had wealth,
Would be to teach the filthy to be clean.
When I expound to them the rules of health,
They look amazed, and know not what I mean.
Those beings “stink” from personal gangrene,
With air and water free, and all about,
To keep them clean and well, inside and out.”

184.

“I try to teach them of the rhythmic breath,
Of water's, and parana's holy mission;
And why control of sex force wards off death,
And makes them bold to face their sad condition;
Their wills are all congealed by fear's cohesion;
With wars, and crimes, and shums, I do extol
The recent propoganda of birth control.”

185.

The kingdom of the fish, the bird and beast,
By culture has been brought to near perfection;
While human imbecility has increased
Thru ignorance of self and wrong selection.
The next step forward is in that direction.
Where is the reason, sense or benefit,
Derived from breeding weaklings and unfit.

186.

“Yet I am sure some force will lift them up;
Economic-determinism or mental-spiritual;
I know race evolution will not stop,
And shall at length exalt the individual,
By disannulling the dark ages’ ritual;
And I am going to teach, where e’er I can,
The inner power of the super-man.”

THE INNER POWER.

187.

“Draw direct from the Mother source,
And demand your right to be free;
And attain through the all-pervading force,
To whatever you wish to be.”

188.

Assert the “I” of the universe,
The dynamic, spiritual “I,”
Affirmed intensely, it doth disperse
The clouds on the mental sky.

189.

“Rely on the might of Truth, of Being,
Deny the evil, the false, untrue,
Stand in the light, serene, all seeing—
A center of power, forever new.”

190.

All is mind in the cosmic realm,
The relative, tho’t-force manifest;
With love as incentive and faith at the helm,
The universe answers at your request.”

191.

"Loving and learning and laughing will
Expand you and make you grow;
When in need of assistance, Be Still! Be Still!
And the silence will let you know."

192.

The ruffians on the street would point her out,
And flirty men would wink and almost speak;
Her withering glance put one of these to route;
The other at proximity, did sneak,
The air with cold aloofness, seemed to reek;
Except the slums, her presence did encroach,
The world seemed falling back at her approach.

193.

'Twas sad to see her sitting there alone,
With Will and Ann at pleasureable events,
Playing the role of seeming to atone,
With her vast store of truth and innocence.
She could have gone and froze their insolence;
But Mother must be saved at any cost;
She had sinned and won and Charlott lost.

194.

The shielding influence of propinquity,
A Mother of the blood would have supplied;
To screen the focused scorn's intensity—
Even that mitigation was denied.
She was to none related, joined, allied,
But like a rock, by angry billows surged,
Overwhelmed and lashed, but still was not submerged.

195.

For five long years the social cancellation
Had been imposed, since they had come from France;
No girlhood friends, no calls, no invitations;
No social function, nor a public dance;
No beans, but libertines, had made advance.
At times its tension strained her strongest strength;
When something called, and she resolved at length.

196.

Charlott loved the dear old grand piano,
 And sang sweet songs to its accompaniment;
 At times, in plaintive tones, her high soprano
 Seemed bursting with emotions, strongly pent.
 Music speaks the feeling through the language of accent,
 And only natures, keyed to higher pitch,
 Can understand its meaning, pure and rich.

197.

The folks were gone one evening, to a party—
 Across the finger board her head did lean;
 She could have eased her heart by weeping “heartily,”
 But just one tear fell on the keys unseen—
 “Old friend, you are the only one who sees;
 You understand me and know what I mean;
 You always sympathize, and stand between
 Me and the frigid world, and bring me ease.
 Your silver notes, in accents kind and keen,
 Voice all my feelings in your melodies.”

198.

“Away my weakness; when I am alone
 There is a song I dearly love to sing;
 Its words transmute my yearnings into tone,
 And buoys my burden on untiring wing.
 It speaks of that impulse in everything—
 Instilled therein, before the earth’s first morn—
 The clamor of the “Ego-soul” unborn.

SONG.

199.

My heart is beating for you, dear;
 I know that you are always near;
 I love you, love you, do you hear?
 Why do you keep me waiting here?

200.

I know not, lover, who you are,
 And yet, I know you, too, it seems;
 You cannot be so far, so far,
 Because I met you in my dreams.

201.

I will know you when we meet,
And you will know me, too, I'm sure;
Our soul's been in communion sweet,
So many, many times before.

202.

I hear you in the silence dense,
And do you, lover, hear my song?
My love is growing more intense
By waiting, waiting here so long.

203.

My heart is aching, can it be
My fault that we are still apart?
Will you, will you come to me,
Or must I go to you, sweetheart?

204.

Where are you now? Oh! tell me where?
I cannot longer linger here;
I know you love me so sincere,
I am coming, coming to you dear.

205.

One night at home, the silence seethed with feelings sweetly
 blent,
Which throbbed to be expressed, in tears or tone;
Will said at length, "Lean back on me when obstacles present
Their seeming force to bar your rise, out in the world alone;
I'll stand between you and the imps who wished to "throw the
 stone;"
But use your fall to build a stronger bulwark of your own.
I'll take care of Jackie; consider he's my boy."
Charlott's tears were streaming now, surcharged with purest
 joy;
They were the first that ever flowed, the rest had all been hid;
But when the tears in his eyes showed, then she was glad they
 did.

206.

The young girl soon departed for a great conservatory,
To take an advanced music course and study higher art;

She had many suitors there and mushy oratory,
 Of simpering swains who swore she stole their heart.
 Little try-out love affairs, nothing of import;
 Studying, aspiring, climbing up to fame,
 The public had already begun to hear her name.

207.

Finally, she met a man—could he be her affinity?
 He was the first to stir the sleeping chord within her breast:
 He seemed to her an idol, a colossus, a divinity—
 Oh, could she cancel that unsavory past?
 At his close gaze, she stood as rooted fast
 In fear, that he with supernatural eye
 Was spying out the truth, which was a lie.

208.

Their courtship was the bliss that comes to sane and natural
 lives,
 Love fused their hearts at passion's welding forge;
 Within the realm of mutual love, how soon the time arrives
 When matrimony looms, both high and large.
 There was one caustic duty Charlott must discharge—
 She used it as a means, she deemed, would serve her purpose
 best,
 To test her lover's truth—would he prove equal to the test?

209.

If he should waver at the crucial point . . .
 And meet her true lie with unjust rebuff,
 Then she must lose him, though her heart disjoint,
 And all her strength required to be enough;
 But he was made of stronger, tensile stuff.
 Much courage was required to make the test—
 It won, and paid by seasoning love with zest.

210.

She told him, then, about her past; not the real truth—the lie—
 The blot of that removeless stain which darkened all her life,
 And asked him, if his love would stand against undying infamy,
 Or if, in justice to himself, could he make her his wife?
 Her interdiction, frank and fearless, stabbed him like a knife—
 He may be termed "a simple fool," or else, "a super lover,"
 For he replied, "Sweetheart, lets calmly talk the matter over."

211.

Outwardly, he strove to hide the vipered sentence smart,
And then began, by saying, "Dear, we may as well be sensible—
Our lives would each be purposeless, here on earth apart;
And I feel that you are wiser, more strong and more invincible,
By going through the acid test of life's refining crucible.
We'll live forever in the now, the all-absorbing present;
Forget the past, by holding fast its lessons most unpleasant."

212.

When she informed him, weeping, that the story was not so,
The man was put beside himself with joy.
He gloried in the fact that she was pure as driven snow;
And she, that he contained no base alloy.
They soon were married; two girls and a boy
Have blessed their home, and to this hour, she
Has told the secret to none else but he.

213.

Annie's life with Will flowed daily on,
In passive kindness and harmony.
Her love for Jack was transferred to her son,
Augmented by his illegitimacy—
A curious fact in nature's alchemy.
Her inward vultures tore with beak and claw,
When Will would speak about the boy's "Papa."

214.

His daily goodness had aroused in her
An admiration born of true respect;
The antipodes of his true character,
Re-loomed Jack's weakness with enhanced reflect.
Her love for him had not been killed, but wrecked;
And as Will grew more high in her regard,
Her sin's concealment's pressure grew more hard.

215.

Ten years now, since Charlott left full of silence crammed—
Annie bared her shivering soul to Will;
He looked as her, embarrassed, stunned, and said "Well I'll
be damned,
You certainly take the prize for keeping still.
It surely cured your illness, and I'm glad you had your fill;
I don't know which to call it, a blessing or a crime,
But had I known, I might have raised the Devil at the time.

216.

“I am relieved to learn you are the parent;
I have in secret scanned the son’s address,
Discovering many traits inborn, inherent,
Resembling characteristics you possess.
To tell the truth, I have surmised no less;
It seemed absurd, the semblance is so true,
That Charlott marked him thru her love for you.

217.

“I could not bring myself to deem it so,
As she and you possess no ties of blood;
Your temperaments opposed, as flame and snow—
Your forms and posture bear no likelihood;
Each the others antipode, in lineament and attitude.
Your face would flame with conscious fire, when conversation
did allude
Unto young Jackie’s mooted sire—you might have known I
understood.

218.

“I have not found in Charlott’s letters where
She spoke of Jackie as a mother would;
While you have shown the deeper love and care,
That is instilled alone thru motherhood.
This coupled with the great similitude,
I here have stated, twixt the boy and you,
Confirmed and proved the inference I drew.

219.

“How did you have the heart to place upon her
The weight of such an everlasting curse—
When we had pledged upon our sacred honor
To shield and shelter her in the reverse.
Your sin was bad, the excuse was ten times worse;
I cannot understand how you could do it—
You should have known that you would live to rue it.

220.

“Let us forget and speak of it no more—
It is too late to cancel or redress;
Had you unburdened thus your heart before,
It would have made your secret sorrow less—
Your conscience stabs both killed your happiness.
’Tis ever so—the being but descends,
Who seeks to gain by base or selfish ends.

221.

“The first thing I must do is write a letter.
Fetch me pen and paper, will you, Ann?
Your late confession makes me feel much better—
I know you loved me not, and never can.
Our trials have proved we did oppose life’s plan;
But still we may some consolation draw
Since Charlott has exemplified the law.”

THE LETTER.

222.

“I bow in reverence, dear; why did not you,
Years ago explain the situation?
You need have had no fear what I would do—
Myself had been the last consideration.
My highest aim has been to raise you to
Womanhood’s most high and holy station,
And you have reached it by the right equation.
I feel through knowing all you’ve sacrificed,
There may be in our midst unknown, a Christ.”

223.

Her violet eyes with tears of joy englassed,
And countenance of one supremely blest,
She penned these lines: “My Father, dear, at last
You know the secret of my love’s dear test;
You were the one who planted in my breast
The truth that sacrifice for love repays,
And, therefore, you deserve the greater praise.

224.

“I feel your helpful influence every hour
Come vibrant to me, ’cross the miles between.
From early youth, its force has lent me power
To stand alone, and live in faith serene.
At my departure, when you bid me lean
On you in troubled hours, I would have been
A thousand times o’erjoyed, amidst our tears,
Could I have only whispered in your ears:
I’m guiltless, guiltless; you need have no fears.

225.

“No limits circumscribe a kindly feeling—
Time and silence mean not lack of tho’t;
Memory ’cross the void is always stealing
To those we love, although they know it not;
We feel at times as if we were forgot
By loved ones, which the distance is concealing.
It is not so—maturer years hath wrought
Enhanced perspective of our love’s revealing.

226.

“We may be near and still be far removed,
If harmony of soul doth not exist.
Propinquity’s oblivion oft hath proved
That absent near-bloods sometimes are not missed.
But memories of your kindness does resist
Corrosive time, and keeps my love ingrooved.
You never failed to champion or enlist
To aid the sinful, helpless or unloved.”

227.

“You did not even condemn my seeming sin;
And when your faith was stabbed, you did not censure;
But on the wreck of what should have been,
Would have rebuilt a scathless, moral structure;
By deep infusions of the pure admixture
Of courage, hope and strength to rise again,
And now you know ’twas not bestowed in vain.”

228.

“Add your hope force to an old desire,
Grow inward potent, in my mind of late;
That some auspicious circumstance transpire,
To have us mingle at no distant date—
I see its consummation as I wait
Desire and Hope are Happen-So’s true sire;
Attraction’s law thru love doth operate,
And will materialize for the applier.”

229.

“I keep your letter in a silver locket—
A prize which this world’s lucre cannot bring.
Its coming loomed my spirit like a rocket,
And made my soul within my matrix sing

Inspired continuance of administering
To spiritual and physical destitution,
Of all below me in life's evolution."

230.

I have espoused the woman's suffrage cause
To disannul the sex inferiority
Imposed by biblical and tribal laws,
And shamelessly upheld by the majority.
I stand on moral right as my authority,
And voice by ultimatum to the males,
Which follows here condensed, shorn of details."

HER ULTIMATUM.

231.

"Woman's purer influence spurs man to cleaner action—
Where men alone rule anything, it grows to putrefaction.
Gigantic steals and crooked deals and moral laws infraction,
And snooping graft be more than halved by intuitive exaction;
Political trades of many grades be reduced to a fraction;
And many great old ill's of state be minus by subtraction,
If she would mix in politics and be a potent faction,
And rise she must from out the dust of ancient precept's
traction,

Her place as mother of the race, the nation's superstruction,
In justice might demands her right, to vote at the election.
You should rejoice to give her voice, in every law's enactment;
Her entrance to the field they view with much dissatisfaction—
The public thieves and make-believes and moss-backs of reac-
tion."

232.

The 'Dear old Folks' have prospered and are comfortable now,
"Jackie" is a pretty fair sized lad;
Annie was more grieved because Will did not raise a row,
Than if the news had drove him raving mad;
It smote her that he did not scorn to be a "proxy dad,"
And she had heard it whispered oft that Charlott had "gone
bad;"

She seemed to fail from that day on and nothing made her glad.

233.

Some months later, Charlott sat in silent reverie—
The children each had said their evening prayer.

She seemed to hear her Mother's voice cry, "Charlott come to me;"

I need your benediction now, I'm dying in despair;
It makes the burden of my sins thrice harder now to bear,
By having transferred them to you, thru cowardice and fear;
O Come! And say you pardon me, before it is too late,
And I can then die happier, but I have not long to wait."

234.

The doorbell rang. Unconsciously, she shouted, unaware,
"Is that you Father?" "No; I'm dreaming still."
The words had scarcely died before the door flew open there,
And 'cross the threshold eagerly strode Will.
He grasped her in his strong arms' fold, "Why, Charlott, are you ill?
You look so startled, weird and pale, withal so calm and bland;
You knew that I was coming? Ah, yes; now, I understand."

235.

"Daddy, dear, I knew it; but I thought that I was dreaming—
So many things within my mind were spread.
Oh! Was the message really truth, or was it only seeming;
Is she dying, tell me; Is she dead?"
The father stood with reverent mien, and thereat bowed his head;
She's sinking, Charlott, sinking; and she calls and calls you so;
That I have come to take you, if you will consent to go."

236.

"Go! I shall go instantly; my husband is up-stairs;
The children several hours have now been sleeping
Come with me and meet them; they will know you in their prayers.
They learned the name of "Grand-Pa" in the days when they were creeping.
I will awake my husband and will leave them in his keeping.
We must hasten; you may visit, while I pack my grip and dress;
Oh! Had I known before, I could have made her suffering less."

237.

Within an hour the taxicab had borne them to the station.
The father sensed the vibrant thrill of Charlott's deep affection.
He felt her dynamic force for good, her spiritual exaltation,
Which rushed to aid the one who scarred her youth with

shame's infection.

The nameless sin she had assumed rebounded by reflection—
Redoubling thence the conscience smite, which Annie felt
before—

To shun responsibilities, doth make our troubles more.

238.

Ascending now the "Old Home Steps" in tense and hurried
fashion,

They reached the cot where wasted Annie lay—
The misdirected ruins of a love inflamed to passion,
Upon whose altar her poor heart was burnt and purged away—
Her tired soul, impatient to ascend from out the clay,
The husband and the daughter gazed in silence each at other,
Then leaning o'er the shrunken form, she gently whispered,
"Mother."

239.

Annie raised her sunken eyes, and laboring hard for breath,
In piteous, pensive tones breathed Charlott's name.
"The wicked wrongs I heaped on you have hastened on my
death,
But I did not have the courage, dear, to die until you came;
Say you love me, and forgive me." "Mother, you are not to
blame;
You lacked the intelage to build your chaste love's structure
strong;
And still I know that you were right, the world is always
wrong.

240.

"My Mother, dear, you always did the thing you deemed was
right;
You followed love's supreme demand and scorned formality.
You only broke the false concept which universe laws indict,
And does transform the truths of life into an unreality—
To propagate thru trust in love is not base immorality.
We know that inborn love has neither ending nor beginning,
The fault is not your own—you were "more sinned against
than sinning."

241.

"I have nothing to forgive you; and I love you, love you dearly,
And I suffered not from all I did assume.

It steeled my will with valor—my eyes have seen more clearly,
 And thru it, my latent powers have come to bloom.
 And Mother, I assure you, there is solace in the tomb,
 And suffering souls in bliss shall rise in future evolution—
 You will be blest with peace, and rest, and need no absolution.”

242.

The beams of intense feeling fairly gushed from Charlott's
 eyes,
 In showering spray, upon the form beneath,
 Whose face now bore the sweet impress of one in “Paradise;”
 There, with a smile, the Mother ceased to breathe;
 The daughter sighed half audible, “How beautiful is death.”
 “The cycle run. It is the law. What ever is, is best;
 The wearied soul in bondage here, is better laid at rest.”

243.

Charlott waited to attend poor Annie's obsequies;
 Her mission being ended, she was eager to be home.
 And Will assured her, parting, he would surely sell or lease
 All his interests herabout, and with the boy would come,
 And evermore reside with her, and be her children's chum.
 Jackie had arrived e'er this, at his majority,
 And by Jack's will and testament, became a legatee.

244.

The will had been contested, but wisely the deceased
 Assigned each heir a meagre sum to kill their legal chance.
 One-half of his estate unto young Jackie was bequeathed,
 The other half, to her he loved so dear in sunny France.
 The young man is in college now, determined to advance,
 And use his learning's might to raze old false idea's castle;
 Through the “Aristocracy of Mind” which knows not King,
 nor vassal.

245.

The years have passed, we see a man whose hair is silver gray;
 The children's champion, guide and friend—they all love “Uncle Will.”
 He now has passed the ninetieth stone on life's uncertain way;
 His form erect, his step is firm, his eyes doth glisten still—
 One only man who all thru life has never once been ill;
 And if you were a stranger and should ask who he may be,
 They would answer: “Charlott's Father,” You would know im-
 mediately.

246.

The entire nation had become acquainted with her name;
She was loved by all but bigots whose insight is never clear—
Yet in spite of their renewed assaults, achieved a lasting fame,
Thru healing ills by substituting, Harmony for Fear,
Assailed for teaching principles to which she did adhere—
The higher economics and philosophy of the mind—
Was subject to indignities, and even jailed and fined.

247.

Her prestige has grown mighty now, and neutralized the hate;
And thru her efforts, multitudes are learning life's true basis.
That each for all, and all for each, in love co-operate;
And kill the brute instinct in man, in all its heinous phases,
By striving each for others good, the "Self" expands and raises
And when enough contracted minds are opened to the light,
Concerted tho't by justice wrought will set the world aright.

248.

I wrote this little elegy of Jack's—
The suicide from moral decompose;
To carve upon his gravestone with an ax,
As lasting reference for his friends and foes.

ELEGY.

249.

"Here lies a man, so infamously rich
That he became most criminally lazy;
From selfishness, or pride, or both, or each,
His back foresight and inward outlook lazy.

250.

For inconvenience, gout and sluggish blood,
Each hour he took a dose, a pill or capsule.
His stomach served a boycott on the food,
His heart rebellious and his liver wrathful.

251.

His emotion's chemical disaffinity
Had poisoned all his ductless glands' secretions;

He could not heal by helpless pharmacy,
Mental maladies and psychic lesions.

252.

He feared that apoplexy or a stroke,
Would be his sad and necessary ending;
His heirs were always wishing he would "croak"—
His hollow friends made solid, by his spending.

253.

A package of distress he went about,
Receiving counterfeited sympathy;
Was deeply envied by the down and out,
Who wished to suicide the same as he.

254.

The Doctor said, "A phony operation"
Would stop his bitter ills from growing worse;
They knew he was a victim of stagnation,
And only wished to gently carve his purse.

255.

They did not land the sucker—so to speak—
He cowered in fear at mention of a knife;
His heart was faint, his nerves and will were weak,
From dodging difficulties all his life.

256.

The saddest part was, others drank the gall,
When he alone should make the recompense;
Yet tears and grief and sorrow came to all
Who breathed his fetid, poison influence.

257.

He suffered much; his life of joy was shorn;
He dared not even perpetuate his name.
He made the grand mistake of being born,
And so the family tree must bear the blame.

258.

He died from want of breath and loss of function;
His life was gauzy, limp and purposeless;
The thing which caused his timely, sweet extinction,
Was "Cost of Wealth," and "Unearned Surplus."

THE END.



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